

# **EXHIBIT 1**

STATE OF NEW YORK

STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

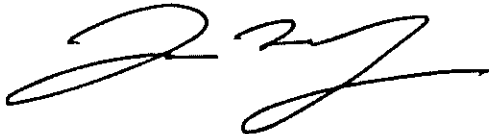
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VERIFIED

PETITION

In the Matter of Juneau Wang, on behalf of Juneau Wang (himself) from CAPTION action of the Board of Education of the Bethlehem Central School District regarding the exclusion from school or suspension for discipline.

\_\_\_\_\_X



TO THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION:

1. My name is Juneau Wang and I reside at 11 Empire Cir, Slingerlands NY 12159 within the School District.
2. My relationship to Juneau Wang is himself. I am a graduating senior within the Bethlehem Central School District.
3. Juneau Wang has resided within the Bethlehem Central School District for 11 years.
4. I (Juneau Wang) was selected by the Bethlehem Speech Committee to have the honor of being the keynote speaker at the graduation ceremony on 06/26. The committee's selection was based upon the committee's criteria and evaluations and was publically announced on 06/01. I made many rounds of revisions based on the committee's recommendations, rehearsed the presentation of my speech, and devoted substantial time and effort, and worked very hard preparing and recording my speech.
5. Superintendent Monroe (date unknown), apparently acting upon the complaint of a student or parent, secretly overturned the high school's decision and directed that I be excluded from speaking and that someone else be selected to speak. Her decision and actions were taken without prior notice to me of the basis for her action, without providing me the opportunity to be heard, and without providing any written explanation for her actions and decision. After discovering her actions, I objected to

Superintendent Monroe on 06/08 and asked to be heard. She agreed to talk only one week later on (06/15) at which time she said it was “too late” to change her decisions.

6. Superintendent Monroe stated on June 15<sup>th</sup> her reasons for overruling the speech committee and barring me from speaking at the Graduation as follows:
  - a. That my friends and I created on a private home computer when I was 15 years of age on January 1, 2018, a list of girls that was culled down to one person we most admired and considered exceptional and has been referred to as a “bracket”. That list, which had been created for my friends only, we did not publish the list and the list contained no text, other than names, but it was discovered and posted by others on social media. The list (reflecting opinions) and its preparation did not violate the District Code of Conduct, was protected speech, and no disciplinary proceedings were commenced. To put this behind us, I and some friends followed our school counselors’ guidance, wrote an apology, and underwent counseling.
  - b. That I had included a sentence in my 2019 published book, *A Teenage Boy’s Perspective on Life: Making the Most and Finding Happiness*: “As in real life instances, if girls made a bracket of guys, guys would laugh it off,” to which she objected.
7. Superintendent Monroe also said she had received complaints from one or more girls or their parents who had objected to me speaking at graduation as I had participated in creating the list and they questioned the sincerity of my 2018 apology (which I did fully under the guidance of administration).
8. On June 15<sup>th</sup>, Superintendent Monroe advised that I could appeal her decision by submitting a letter to her and the Board of Education. I then sent a detailed letter to the Superintendent and the BOE on June 16<sup>th</sup>. The BOE in executive session on June 17<sup>th</sup> reviewed my letter and the excerpts of my book but not my speech as the superintendent did not provide that to the BOE. On June 18<sup>th</sup>, the President of the BOE said the BOE had upheld the Superintendent’s decision but provided no explanation for such action.
9. The replacement keynote speaker, Gillian Roeder, was selected on 06/14 and the *Spotlight News* (06/17-06/23 Edition) was published, printed, and released to the community before the BOE’s (06/17) review of my appeal.
10. Despite my multiple requests, the District (BOE and Superintendent) refused to provide reasons or written explanation for blocking my graduation speech.
11. Their actions violate my rights to freedom of speech, to due process before imposing the sanctions and discipline of revoking honors awarded and excluding me from class activities, representation, and evidence.
12. Their actions treated me discriminatively treating me different from others in that: they did not adhere to Code due process procedures; they imposed sanctions for private speech 2.5 years earlier and public speech in 2019 that was not prohibited by the Code but was protected by it; the Superintendent acted

secretly and without transparency; the failure to provide the speech to the BOE shows that the decision to exclude me from speaking was made not because of the content of the planned speech but was about me as a person. The District's actions have ultimately deprived me of a fair appeal. I am an Asian-American, so I must be alert to bias and discrimination.

13. My appeal (06/16) had been denied (06/17) and they refuse to give any reconsideration or consider facts of their wrongdoing or court cases as provided in my lawyer's (06/20) letter. The District's attorney has confirmed that the decision is final and will not be reconsidered, despite the submission of documents showing egregious infringement of my rights and mistreatment of me.
14. Their actions continue to harm my physical, mental, and psychological health and my good reputation. The revocation of the honor I had been awarded will harm my reputation as classmates will believe I had engaged in some misconduct warranting such draconian action. The erasure of my name gravely damages my reputation and wellbeing.
15. Since graduation is on Friday (06/26), I ask urgently (06/24) for your intervention to right injustice and discrimination against me by the Superintendent and Board of Education.
16. Since this is urgent and time-sensitive, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at any time via:
  - a. Cell Phone: (617)306-8086
  - b. Email: [juneauwang@gmail.com](mailto:juneauwang@gmail.com)
  - c. School Email: [jwang652@bethlehemschools.org](mailto:jwang652@bethlehemschools.org)

WHEREFORE, Juneau Wang \_\_\_\_\_ respectfully requests:

1. Interim immediate relief staying the decisions of the Superintendent and Board of Education and permitting Mr. Wang's graduation speech, as recorded, to be shown during the graduation ceremonies on Friday June 26, 2020 with or without an explanatory statement and Mr. Wang to participate in all school activities and events to which he is eligible pending a decision on the merits of this appeal, and
2. A full hearing be ordered with proper notice of the charges against Mr. Wang and the facts relied upon and with all procedural requirements applicable to disciplinary proceedings;
3. The District be ordered to acknowledge that Mr. Wang has not engaged in any misconduct or violation of the Code of Conduct warranting imposition of any sanctions and to reinstate him as a selected keynote speaker and to all student privileges and honors; and
4. Such other and further relief as the Commissioner deems just and proper.

Dated: June 24th, 2020

NAME Mr. Juneau Wang

ADDRESS 11 Empire Cir., Slingerlands NY 12159

PHONE NUMBER (617)306-8086

ATTACH ANY SUPPORTING AFFIDAVITS AND EXHIBITS.

- PDF: Copy of Graduation Speech Final Draft
- PDF: Final - Appeal to the BOE 06-16-2020
- PDF: BOE.SuperintendentLtr.062020C